

Wage and Hour Division, Labor

§ 780.110

EXEMPTION FOR "PRIMARY" AGRICULTURE GENERALLY

§ 780.106 Employment in "primary" agriculture is farming regardless of why or where work is performed.

When an employee is engaged in direct farming operations included in the primary definition of "agriculture," the purpose of the employer in performing the operations is immaterial. For example, where an employer owns a factory and a farm and operates the farm only for experimental purposes in connection with the factory, those employees who devote all their time during a particular workweek to the direct farming operations, such as the growing and harvesting of agricultural commodities, are considered as employed in agriculture. It is also immaterial whether the agricultural or horticultural commodities are grown in enclosed houses, as in greenhouses or mushroom cellars, or in an open field. Similarly, the mere fact that production takes place in a city or on industrial premises, such as in hatcheries, rather than in the country or on premises possessing the normal characteristics of a farm makes no difference (see *Jordan v. Stark Brothers Nurseries*, 45 F. Supp. 769; *Miller Hatcheries v. Boyer*, 131 F. 2d 283; *Damutz v. Pinchbeck*, 158 F. 2d 882).

FARMING IN ALL ITS BRANCHES

§ 780.107 Scope of the statutory term.

The language "farming in all its branches" includes all activities, whether listed in the definition or not, which constitute farming or a branch thereof under the facts and circumstances.

§ 780.108 Listed activities.

Section 3(f), in defining the practices included as "agriculture" in its statutory secondary meaning, refers to the activities specifically listed in the earlier portion of the definition (the "primary" meaning) as "farming" operations. They may therefore be considered as illustrative of "farming in all its branches" as used in the definition.

§ 780.109 Determination of whether unlisted activities are "farming."

Unlike the specifically enumerated operations, the phrase "farming in all its branches" does not clearly indicate its scope. In determining whether an operation constitutes "farming in all its branches," it may be necessary to consider various circumstances such as the nature and purpose of the operations of the employer, the character of the place where the employee performs his duties, the general types of activities there conducted, and the purpose and function of such activities with respect to the operations carried on by the employer. The determination may involve a consideration of the principles contained in § 780.104. For example, fish farming activities fall within the scope of the meaning of "farming in all its branches" and employers engaged in such operations would be employed in agriculture. On the other hand, so-called "bird dog" operations of the citrus fruit industry consisting of the purchase of fruit unsuitable for packing and of the transportation and sale of the fruit to canning plants do not qualify as "farming" and, consequently, employees engaged in such operations are not employed in agriculture. (See *Chapman v. Durkin*, 214 F. 2d 360 cert. denied 348 U.S. 897; *Fort Mason Fruit Co. v. Durkin*, 214 F. 2d 363 cert. denied, 348 U.S. 897.) However, employees gathering the fruit at the groves are considered agricultural workers because they are engaged in harvesting operations. (For exempt transportation, see subpart J of this part.)

CULTIVATION AND TILLAGE OF THE SOIL

§ 780.110 Operations included in "cultivation and tillage of the soil."

"Cultivation and tillage of the soil" includes all the operations necessary to prepare a suitable seedbed, eliminate weed growth, and improve the physical condition of the soil. Thus, grading or leveling land or removing rock or other matter to prepare the ground for a proper seedbed or building terraces on farmland to check soil erosion are included. The application of water, fertilizer, or limestone to farmland is also included. (See in this connection